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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 31 March 2015, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Drobnjak (Vice-President) ..... (Croatia)

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In the absence of Mr. Sajdik (Austria), Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Achieving sustainable development through employment

Opening of the segment

1. **The President**, opening the integration segment of the Economic and Social Council, said that despite encouraging levels of economic growth, much of Africa continued to face persistent challenges with regard to underemployment and unemployment, particularly among its burgeoning youth population. The economies of African countries were also characterized by a high incidence of informality and challenges posed by lack of peace and security.

2. *A panel discussion on the topic "At Work in Africa", moderated by Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins (Angola), co-Chair, Group of Friends of Decent Work for Sustainable Development, was held. The panellists were Mr. Ebrahim Patel (Minister for Economic Development, South Africa); Mr. Hakim Ben Hammouda (former Minister of Finance, Tunisia and Special Advisor to the President, African Development Bank); Mr. Aeneas Chuma (Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, International Labour Organization); and Mr. Alioune Sall (Executive Director, African Futures Institute, South Africa). The discussant was Mr. David Mehdi Hamam (Director, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa).*

General debate

3. **Mr. Patel** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that between 1991 and 2007, global employment had grown at an average annual rate of 1.7 per cent. As a result of the global economic crisis, annual growth had slowed to 1.2 per cent between 2007 and 2014. In 2014, there had been approximately 201 million people unemployed worldwide. About 277 million jobs would have to be created over the coming five years to compensate for the crisis and account for growth in the labour force. The share of jobs in the agricultural sector in developing countries had fallen from 53 per cent in 1991 to 35 per cent in 2013, which was cause for concern. In the least developed countries, about 60 per cent of total employment was still in agriculture. In the lower-middle-income countries, that figure was 42 per cent, and in emerging economies, it was 20 per cent. Youth unemployment rates had reached 13 per cent in 2014, almost three times higher than the unemployment rate for adults. Given that young people represented nearly a quarter of the global population, employment creation for them was critical to economic growth and sustainable development. Africa, with over 200 million people between the ages of 15 and 24, had the highest concentration of young people on the planet, and thus required particular attention.

4. Almost half of the world's employed population was still working in vulnerable conditions, largely in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. They were primarily women, who faced tremendous obstacles in accessing basic necessities and decent work. While real wage growth in 2013 had reached 6 per cent in Asia and nearly 6 per cent in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, it had amounted to less than 1 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean and on the African continent.

5. Slow employment and wage growth had contributed to a long-term decline in the labour-income chain in most countries. In developing countries, the middle class accounted for about 34 per cent of total employment. In the advanced economies, almost 25 per cent of total income had gone to the wealthiest 10 per cent in 2011. To attain equitable and balanced development, such vast disparities must be addressed. Coordinated international efforts to develop new thinking and appropriate strategies would be required for inclusive economic growth and job creation. Governments must be afforded policy space to face domestic challenges based on their own realities. Development must not be imposed, but must be in line with domestic economic strategies and the objectives of Member States. Developed countries must fulfil their official development assistance (ODA) commitments to developing countries and provide genuine debt relief to the least developed countries.

6. Development goals could not be credible unless the need for urgent reform of global financial and economic governance structures was recognized. The Group of 77 and China called, therefore, for implementation of the 2010 International Monetary Fund (IMF) governance and quota reform. IMF must be well resourced to respond to members facing financial and economic crises. Failure to implement the agreed reforms was compromising the ability of IMF

to access the necessary resources to perform that critical function. The Group of 77 and China looked forward to a more comprehensive reform process for the international financial institutions. In building a more equitable enabling environment for development, it was necessary to move away from a model based on profitability, placing emphasis on productivity rather than on the interests of the speculative market economy.

7. The United Nations was a unique universal forum for promoting development in the context of globalization, especially the integration of developing countries into the globalizing economy, to enable them to take advantage of their full potential for economic growth and development. The United Nations must therefore play a fundamental role in promoting and strengthening international cooperation and coherence, coordination and implementation of internationally agreed goals, including the unmet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the outcome of the post-2015 development agenda. The Group believed that the United Nations must spearhead global efforts to assist States in achieving sustainable development through employment creation and decent work for all, through its platforms and universal coverage. To that end, South-South cooperation should be strengthened, even as North-South cooperation remained the primary means of opening up development bottlenecks. All stakeholders were urged to work together in creating synergies to provide decent work that would benefit the entire global workforce and give hope to those who had given up looking for work. That would help millions worldwide to emerge from poverty and join the mainstream economy, as opposed to being left on the periphery of development.

8. **Mr. Wallin** (Finland) said that his country saw the International Labour Organization (ILO) as one of the most important global development organizations and attached great importance to equality in labour markets. Finland had a century-old policy of gender inclusivity in labour markets, which had in fact resulted in higher employment for women than for men. It was also important to give women the same opportunities as men in education and lifelong learning.

9. Labour policy had been focused on youth employment; after three months of unemployment, young people and those who had completed their education and were less than 29 years of age were guaranteed jobs. The policy had, however, resulted in higher unemployment among the middle-aged. Finland had one of the world's most educated working populations. Secondary school degrees were universal, and 40 per cent of the workforce held university degrees. Nonetheless, because of the global economic situation, foreign enterprises were not rushing to enter the Finnish market.

10. It was important to prevent violations of fundamental rights at work, which included guaranteeing freedom of association and collective bargaining, ensuring safety in the workplace and prohibiting forced or child labour. Otherwise, there could be no balanced economy worldwide.

11. It was regrettable that economic growth in Africa had not led to increased employment. Africa needed more middle-sized companies. In economies that were doing well, small, medium-sized and large companies existed in balanced proportions. The most successful economies also had a large share of middle-income families. Such families consumed, spent money and generally had decent work.

12. For demographic reasons, the next two decades would be marked by labour shortages worldwide. Higher productivity was the only solution. Digitization could raise productivity, but could also lead to the loss of familiar types of jobs without creating new ones. An example of that in the Finnish economy was the gaming sector, which generated billions but employed very few people.

13. **Mr. Bedas** (France) said that youth unemployment, which stood at 23.7 per cent in France, was a source of particular concern, as it could lead to poverty, problems with socialization and social cohesion, low productivity and shortfalls in social protection. The growing phenomenon of young people who were neither employed nor enrolled in any form of education or training programme was also of concern. In France, 900,000 people between the ages of 15 and 24 were in the category labelled "not in employment, education or training (NEETs)".

14. The President of France had made youth employment a priority. Government interventions included a job creation programme, designed to keep young people employed and enable them to acquire good work habits, under which 180,000 jobs had been created thus far. There was also strong support for apprenticeships in both the public and private sectors. A benefit of 1,000 euros for the recruitment of a first

apprentice, previously offered to employers with a maximum of 50 staff members had been extended to employers with up to 250 staff members. The goal was to have 500,000 apprenticeships by 2017. There were plans to spell out apprentices' rights and legal situation clearly. Apprenticeships were an important transitional phase from education to the world of work.

15. The European Commission Youth Guarantee, designed to offer training, internships and jobs to young people, had provided an opportunity for France to update its measures for those young people who were at the greatest remove from job opportunities. The prevention aspect of the programme included raising teacher awareness with regard to young people at risk of leaving the education system without a diploma. In France as elsewhere, the youth employment rate was inversely proportional to educational levels. The Government had responded by launching a programme to reduce the drop-out rate.

16. At the national agency called *Pôle emploi* ["employment centre"], 600 staff members provided personalized assistance to at-risk youth. Local offices of the agency worked to place those most in need of assistance in internships, training and jobs. They also helped young people in extremely difficult situations find their footing in society and provided guidance and, in some cases, psychological counselling.

17. Workplace gender equality measures had also been adopted, including rules designed to achieve greater gender balance on corporate boards of directors and support female entrepreneurship.

18. During the upcoming General Assembly, Member States would adopt a new development agenda. The ILO decent work agenda had an important role to play in sustainable development, as did social protection. Decent work was key to socioeconomic progress and long-term development and was also a way of addressing poverty.

19. While the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals failed to mention the promotion of social dialogue, it had made a good start by recognizing the importance of decent work and social protection for all. France supported the Working Group's proposed sustainable development goals.

20. **Ms. Roostiavati** (Observer for Indonesia) said that her country had undertaken to reduce carbon levels by 26 per cent by 2020. The transformation of the national economy to sustainable, low-carbon development would trigger shifts in the labour market and create demands for new skills and measures to facilitate a just transition for workers, employers and enterprises. Changes in production and consumption patterns toward a climate-friendly economy would mean incorporating social, gender and employment dimensions into decision-making. Labour authorities and social partners would have a role to play in developing inclusive and coherent climate policies. Commitment at the highest political level would be needed to ensure that environmental policy could address the gender and social dimensions.

21. Indonesia was involved in the ILO Green Jobs in Asia Project, whose main purpose was to assist with the shift to a low-carbon, environmentally friendly and climate-resilient economy accompanied by jobs recovery, reduction of social gaps, support for development goals and decent work. Through enhanced capacity of ILO constituents and national partners, the project contributed directly to national initiatives on employment, climate change, environment and disaster management and recovery from the economic crisis. The ILO constituents were, it was hoped, knowledgeable about the impact of climate policies on the labour market and the potential for gender-responsive green jobs.

22. The ILO constituents were the key target group for creating long-term capacity and social dialogue to mainstream green jobs into social and employment policy, contribute actively to climate and environmental policies at the national level and facilitate a just transition by enterprises and workers to a low-carbon, environmentally friendly economy.

23. Indonesia had also organized training for instructors at local and subregional productivity centres to accelerate green productivity in companies and government agencies throughout the country. A green workshop would be held in 2015 to harmonize visions from all sectors with a view to achieving greater sustainability and environmentally friendly conditions.

24. **Mr. Shearman** (United Kingdom) said that over the past 20 years, the number of people living in extreme poverty had fallen by half, resulting in better lives for 700 million people worldwide. The driver was economic growth; in places where long-term per capita growth was higher than 3 per cent, poverty fell

significantly. With jobs came dignity, as well as tax receipts for Governments, enabling the latter to provide social services. Job creation was therefore key to an ambitious post-2015 development agenda and a priority for the United Kingdom.

25. Across the world, 90 per cent of jobs created were in the private sector. Transparency, taxation and official development assistance (ODA) were important in harnessing private-sector support for sustainable development. Information on company ownership, land ownership and where money flowed should be more readily available. Strong and transparent institutions, the rule of law, strong property rights and the prevention of bribery and corruption would enable open economies to thrive and promote inclusive growth.

26. Joint efforts were required to respond to tax evasion and avoidance. The United Kingdom had worked to address the issue at the Global Forum on Tax Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, attended by 121 countries. It was of particular relevance to developing countries, which needed revenue but had weaker capacity to collect. The United Kingdom had cooperated with the tax authorities of the Government of Ethiopia to help build tax collection capacity. In the past decade, taxes collected in Ethiopia had increased seven times, aiding economic growth and job creation.

27. ODA must be used intelligently. The United Kingdom was the only member of the Group of 20 (G20) to spend 0.7 per cent of its income on ODA. However, there were limits to what ODA could achieve. It should be spent in ways that helped improve the business climate, boosted investment and growth and helped create jobs. The United Kingdom was working with other Governments to build tax capacity, modernize infrastructure, upgrade roads and ensure access to finance for women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises.

28. **Ms. Fox** (United States of America) said that a primary challenge facing all countries was increasing economic growth while ensuring broad-based sharing in the benefits of that growth. The benefits of growth did not automatically flow to all. Fostering inclusive economic growth depended on the ability of an economy to produce jobs with rising real wages, access to social protection and respect for basic rights. That required integration of macroeconomic and employment policies to support the core objective of creating quality jobs. There was an ongoing need to break down the silos into which discussions of economic growth, employment creation, human rights, national security and development had too often been separated. Strategies for growth, poverty alleviation, industrialization, women's economic empowerment, youth employment, the promotion of trade and investment all intersected with the issue of decent work.

29. Achieving inclusive, sustainable growth required understanding the importance of a coherent focus on job creation and decent work in macroeconomic and employment policy. It required investing in social protection floors to help insulate the most vulnerable workers and their families from economic shocks, as well as understanding the need for synchronizing education and training policies to labour market needs. It also required promotion and protection of internationally recognized worker rights, from putting in place and enforcing meaningful standards of workplace safety and health, wages and hours of work to ensuring a voice for workers to advocate for their own interests by protecting freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively.

30. Ways to slow and reverse the increase in inequality within individual economies must be found. ILO and other research indicated that respecting workers' rights led to positive long-term economic outcomes, including higher levels of foreign direct investment (FDI). Bringing workers, especially women, into the formal economy had ripple effects. Inequality declined, while opportunity and social stability increased. Tax collection improved, and countries and communities were stronger and better able to meet their people's rising expectations.

31. Recent initiatives in the United States included a pending proposal to raise the federal minimum wage and successful efforts in 11 states to raise the minimum wage at the state level; a proposed expansion of the earned income tax credit to relieve the tax burden on low and middle-income workers; extension of unemployment insurance benefits; and major health care reforms. The United States had also engaged in discussions of job creation in various international forums.

32. **Ms. Frankinet** (Observer for Belgium) said that her country welcomed the integration segment's focus on job creation and decent work for all. Belgium had

long supported decent work in the context of ILO and the European Union and as Co-Chair of the Group of Friends on Decent Work for Sustainable Development, and welcomed its inclusion in the post-2015 agenda and proposed sustainable development goal 8. Harmonious economic and social development, built on social justice, must be based on respect for basic social rights, productive work freely chosen, extensive social protection and social dialogue. Promotion of gender equality must be taken into account in a cross-cutting fashion. Decent work required a macroeconomic context that created the necessary economic and financial conditions for investment and the creation of productive jobs. At the same time, decent work contributed to growth, the fight against poverty, reduction of inequalities, inclusive development and gradual emergence from an informal economy by providing workers with opportunities, protections and advancement.

33. Decent work was affected by climate change, which destroyed infrastructure and enterprises and inflicted suffering on populations struggling to survive or recover. Decent work must also be part of the adaptation to the reality of climate change, in the form of green jobs, for example.

34. The post-2015 agenda must affirm that, for States, decent work was also a matter of governance. While it was not clear that decent work had been successfully integrated into the United Nations system — something that should be looked into further — there was no doubt that what happened in States and supply chains could make a difference.

35. States must coordinate their economic and job policies and enact legislation enabling all economic actors, including social partners, to participate in social dialogue and collective bargaining. ILO recommended tripartite governance for the implementation of decent work, ensuring input from social partners on economic and social policy.

36. Within supply chains, States and social dialogue were under pressure from the unbridled competition of multinational corporations. Social disasters could be avoided only through dialogue between States hosting production facilities and headquarter States, between companies and international union organizations, and through assumption of social responsibility by enterprises.

37. Given the role of capital in financing, all of the international organizations, banks, funds and programmes must become involved. Ideally, the current integration segment and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda would result in commitments by States, new directions for partners and appropriate modalities.

38. Given its tripartite structure, ILO was clearly central to raising awareness of the importance of decent work to balanced development in all countries, based on the three aspects of sustainable development. In the coming weeks, her Government would be working with ILO Director-General Ryder on successfully advancing decent work as a cross-cutting objective of the post-2015 development agenda and on considering consensual criteria for evaluating implementation of social protection floors, as indicated by ILO recommendation No. 202.

39. **Mr. Kydyrov** (Kyrgyzstan) said that given economic difficulties, volatile markets and the negative impact of climate change, job creation was currently of particular importance. Sustainable economic growth and job creation were not possible without respect for the fundamental human right to decent work. Policies must be based on the principles of broad social dialogue and involvement of all stakeholders, including Governments, employers and workers.

40. Kyrgyzstan was taking comprehensive measures to promote good governance, institutional capacity and legislation. The Government had developed a road map for employment policy through decent work for the period 2011-2015. It included policies and measures that met the key criteria of decent work for all categories of employees, including persons with disabilities.

41. The national sustainable development strategy for the period 2013-2017 prioritized support for the real sectors of the economy and job creation, including creation of green jobs, with a special focus on the development of agriculture and tourism, infrastructure projects, and microfinancing for women and youth entrepreneurs.

42. State regulation of the labour market and employment took into account important national economic development trends and had resulted in Kyrgyzstan's reclassification as a lower-middle-income country.

43. A Presidential Decree had declared 2015 the Year of Strengthening the National Economy and promulgated such priorities as creating new industries and jobs, wage growth, energy development and improved well-being.

44. Nonetheless, there remained a large labour surplus in the country, and labour resources were not highly competitive. The employment rate stood at a mere 58.8 per cent, and the overall unemployment rate was 8.4 per cent. About 1 million Kyrgyz citizens were migrant labourers abroad. His Government therefore accorded high priority to the establishment of an effective system to protect the economic and social rights of labour migrants.

45. Labour migration was growing, especially among the poor, many of whom were potential victims of forced labour and human trafficking. Expert estimates indicated that between 5,000 and 15,000 Kyrgyz citizens had been trafficked abroad. His Government was therefore working actively with partner countries and international organizations on the issue, especially ILO and the International Organization for Migration.

46. Greater cooperation was needed at the regional and subregional levels to ensure equal treatment and fair working conditions, wages, social security and access to justice. An important result of regional cooperation was Kyrgyzstan's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union, which opened up opportunities for freedom of movement and the development of a decent labour market and would provide more effective legal protection for the citizens of its member States, including Kyrgyzstan.

47. Kyrgyzstan fully supported inclusion in the post-2015 agenda of a goal to end poverty in all its forms everywhere and promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Adoption of an updated post-2015 agenda and effective indicators would consolidate the efforts of all Member States and the international community and make possible genuine improvement in the well-being of people in all countries by 2030, based on the principles of full employment and social justice.

48. **Mr. Shava** (Zimbabwe) said that employment was recognized as a key priority in Zimbabwe and at the subregional level. Zimbabwe was guided by the policy framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), whose objective was to harmonize policies and achieve best practices throughout the region. SADC had an employment and labour unit that monitored and coordinated implementation of a regional strategic development plan. The plan promoted sustained economic growth; education and training policies; increased rates of labour absorption; proactive approaches to employment creation at the national level; strategies at the macroeconomic, institutional and enterprise level; enhanced productivity and income generation; and elimination of gender inequalities in the labour market.

49. Since independence, Zimbabwe had been committed to job creation for young people through a massive expansion of education and training at all levels, investments in key economic sectors, support to halt company closures and measures to address liquidity shortages.

50. Policies and strategies had been put in place to address the mismatch between educational programmes and the needs of the job market. The skills gap between institutions of higher learning and industry had resulted in graduates who were deemed unemployable, even in fields such as engineering, information and communications technology, health care and banking. Institutions of higher learning needed to tailor their programmes to meet the needs of the economy.

51. Land reform had provided land to millions of landless people and contributed to employment creation and livelihood support for over 1.7 million people taking up tobacco, cotton, dairy, poultry and hog farming, as well as horticulture, among other areas. Land reform had stemmed migration from rural areas to cities by creating employment opportunities for people where they lived. A recent study indicated that 260,000 permanent jobs had been created by land reform, as well 447,000 seasonal jobs each farming season.

52. His Government's economic blueprint for the period 2013-2018 was crafted to achieve economic growth, sustainable development and social equity based on the four clusters of food security and nutrition, social services and poverty eradication, infrastructure and utilities, and value addition and beneficiation. Those clusters had great potential to spur economic growth and create decent jobs through full exploitation, value addition and beneficiation of the country's abundant natural resources. They also had

the potential to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty in the country. The Government was also reviewing vocational training programmes.

53. The informal sector was important to livelihood support in Zimbabwe. There were approximately 3 million small and medium-sized enterprises in the country, which were an important engine for economic growth and employment creation. In 2012, 2.8 million small and medium-sized enterprises had created nearly 5.7 million informal jobs. However, those enterprises faced many challenges that hampered their growth and success, including lack of access to capital from financial institutions, lack of appropriate technology, lack of business management skills and limited access to markets.

54. His Government was taking various measures to support small and medium-sized enterprises, including regularizing the informal sector through business registration, licensing, opening of business bank accounts and business record-keeping. Such measures would enable the Government to raise revenues through taxation, import duties, and property and other taxes.

55. Efforts to support and promote small and medium-sized enterprises were being pursued by the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and other institutions established for that purpose, including the Small Enterprises Development Corporation, Venture Capital of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Investment Centre and the Infrastructural Development Bank, among others. Financing facilities, tailored management, technical training, infrastructure support, technology acquisition, quality control and research and development services were available. The Government was also working hard to create a business-friendly environment.

56. **Mr. Abdrakhmanov** (Kazakhstan) said that poverty alleviation required macroeconomic strategies at the national, regional and global levels to improve living conditions for the poor and enhance their capacity to work and be productive in both urban and rural areas. As the vast majority of the world's poor lived in rural areas, securing property rights to land — the largest asset for most societies — was vital to economic freedom. In Asia and Africa, farm incomes could be increased through diversified agriculture, improved water management, irrigation and climate change adaptation. Economic ties should be fully depoliticized.

57. Targeted restructuring of the economy that emphasized regionally-based development, increased access to affordable and adequate educational, health and social services provided by the Government, and the promotion of small enterprises, microenterprises and cooperatives would result in economic and social empowerment, especially for women and youth, among whom the unemployment rate was staggering. A rise in employment without increased productivity would not diminish the numbers of working poor. All sectors of society, including agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, trade and the services must grow together to generate a holistic national and regional macroeconomic policy, including for migrants.

58. Policies were needed to upgrade the manufacturing industry and expand high-quality service sectors by training workers for new jobs and skills. Also needed were minimum wages, collective bargaining and other reforms to reduce income inequality, promote inclusive growth and benefit the environment.

59. At the global level, developed countries should refrain from actions that created barriers for developing countries, such as tariffs and sanctions, and should not impose conditions that hampered economic development or employment opportunities. ODA should attract investments for developing infrastructure and telecommunications projects. ODA commitments must be upheld. South-South and triangular cooperation were also essential. Corporate social responsibility, mobilized through the United Nations Global Compact, could make a significant contribution, together with the international financial institutions and regional development banks.

60. Kazakhstan had developed its own long-term vision, called Kazakhstan 2050. The country's goals were to move towards a knowledge-based economy and the development of new, high-tech sectors through investments in education, research, science, medicine, innovation and technology; to create new job opportunities and decent work for a sizeable population; and to help move from an economy based on informal employment to one based on formal employment.

61. It was estimated that by 2050, small and medium-sized businesses would produce at least 50 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and that labour productivity would grow fivefold. If the GDP per capita growth rate attained 4.5 per cent, the middle class would make up a predominant share of the population.

That would enable Kazakhstan to move beyond Millennium Development Goal 1 on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, which it had already reached.

62. A parallel approach, known as the Path to the Future, had been launched to realize the goals for 2050. Despite financial constraints, people-centred development would be pursued in order to ensure a high level of social protection for the vulnerable segments of the population. Government funds equalling $9 billion would support massive infrastructure development, employment and small, medium and large-scale entrepreneurship, including projects for women's employment and youth services. Investments would also be made in health care, education and social welfare.

63. In conclusion, he invited African countries to attend the eighth Astana Economic Forum to be held in May in order to engage in an exchange with experts on enhancing African capabilities.

64. **Mr. Zehnder** (Switzerland) said that sustainable development must be a reality for all citizens. The commitments made under the MDGs and the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen, as well as those to be made under the post-2015 development agenda, must all be met. Negotiation of the post-2015 agenda represented an outstanding opportunity for the world economy to integrate the dimensions of sustainable development. The international community must work to identify relevant policies, on the one hand, and possible conflicts of interest, on the other.

65. Economic growth was necessary but insufficient for ensuring sustainable development and job creation. To contribute to sustainable development, growth must benefit the largest possible number of people. Growth that benefited only one segment of society would lead to inequalities and social tensions. It was essential to integrate developing countries into the world economic system and promote their sustainable growth.

66. The causal links between sustainable development and job creation to combat poverty were complex. The primary challenge was qualitative, involving improving working conditions and productivity. But there was a quantitative challenge as well, involving the need to create sufficient numbers of decent, sustainable jobs. Policy coherence was therefore crucial.

67. An active job market policy must include economic conditions that favoured productivity and the search for new solutions leading to a green economy. Creation of productive jobs and decent work must be central to economic policies and must improve access by poor people to productive resources. For that reason, Switzerland was committed to implementing the ILO decent work agenda and to strengthening international and national policy coherence.

68. Switzerland supported the efforts of the international community to develop a social protection floor and called on all States and social partners to pool their efforts to effectively implement the recently adopted measure to that effect. Switzerland had adopted and implemented a national anti-poverty strategy that aimed to improve the circumstances of people living in poverty at each stage of life.

69. The challenges of coordination and solidarity to ensure sustainable development were shared by all countries, regardless of their level of economic, social or demographic development. Approaches should be integrated and based on the three pillars of the 1995 Social Summit. Social inclusion of all population groups and their integration into the labour market were necessary conditions for the elimination of poverty. It was crucial to avoid working in a vacuum and to draw inspiration from the broad experience of civil society, including social partners.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.